



A supplement to *interactions*



SIGCHI Bulletin is published by
ACM SIGCHI, the Association for
Computing Machinery's Special Interest
Group on Computer Human Interaction

<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/bulletin>

March/April 2001

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From the Editor

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Every Vote Counts

Not to worry, this isn't another column about the U.S. Presidential Election. As you read this, I fully expect the new Bush administration to be comfortably in office, and just a few lingering murmurs about butterfly ballots and the electoral college. No, today I write about an equally serious, but far more current election--the upcoming ballots for the SIGCHI Executive Committee (EC).

As Bulletin editor, I've had the privilege of serving as an unelected, non-voting member of the EC (I know, it sort of sounds like a caffeine-free, diet membership). This experience, together with the knowledge that I'm not a candidate for any office, is what leads me to editorialize about the importance of casting your ballot, and to share some insights about the positions and their responsibilities. You will also receive candidate statements and your ballot straight from ACM. I should make it clear that, as editor, I am endorsing no particular candidates.

The Executive Committee

The SIGCHI EC meets monthly (three times a year in-person, nine times by teleconference) to carry out the business of SIGCHI. This business includes oversight of SIGCHI-sponsored conferences and events, development and oversight of publications, initiating and funding activities to benefit the membership and the field, and all other sorts of educational and professional activities. In addition to seven elected officers, the EC has a three-member advisory board (that holds one vote), a voting past-chair, and non-voting representatives such as yours truly.

The Officers

SIGCHI members elect seven members of the EC. Candidates for Chair and Executive vice-Chair run as a pair, with members selecting one pair for the office. The Chair is the chief executive officer of SIGCHI, responsible both for running the meetings of the EC and for SIG operations between meetings. The Chair appoints adjunct chairs for specific activities and areas (e.g., membership, public policy) and represents SIGCHI at ACM and ACM SIG Governing Board meetings. The Executive vice-Chair takes on such roles as are needed to keep the SIG running; in some cases this involves running special projects, in other cases the Chair delegates specific tasks related to SIGCHI operations.

SIGCHI's five separately-elected vice-Chairs each have specific roles and responsibilities. The vice-Chair for

Communications records and publishes the official record of SIGCHI EC activities and manages SIGCHI's communications with the membership and other organizations. The vice-Chair for Conference Planning chairs the Conference Management Committee and oversees the planning and operations of both the annual CHI conference and the 15-20 conferences that SIGCHI sponsors or co-sponsors each year. The vice-Chair for Finance oversees the SIGCHI budget, tracks revenues and expenditures, and serves as our treasurer. The vice-Chair for Operations oversees a wide range of activities including SIGCHI's electronic infrastructure (web site, mailing lists, etc.) as well as all operational details not specifically within the scope of another officer. The vice-Chair for Publications chairs SIGCHI's Publications Board and oversees the processes and venues for refereed research publication, including SIGCHI-initiated ACM journals and magazines and conference proceedings.

Your Responsibility

As a member of SIGCHI, it is your right, and I believe your responsibility to cast an informed vote for these offices. Read the candidate statements. Learn about the candidates. If you have questions, contact the candidates **before** casting your vote.

And consider working alongside these volunteers. If you have the time and skills to carry out one of these positions, consider running for office in 2003. Better yet, volunteer now to take on a specific role in the organization (perhaps as an adjunct chair) or in one of the conferences. SIGCHI is a volunteer organization--good things only happen when good people get involved.

Wishing you peace, and fully punched ballot holes, and no chad.

NOTE: A list of candidates for the SIGCHI Executive Committee appears on page 9.



From the Chairs

Marilyn Mantei Tremaine and Wendy Mackay
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What Mean CHI Mafia?

A few months ago, one of us visited the Institute for Design of the Illinois Institute of Technology. The visit was to both meet members of the design community and to spend the afternoon being interviewed by a design team taking one of the design communication classes at the Institute. The project assigned in their class was to do an evaluation of the image being projected by an organization and how it matched the goals the organization was trying to achieve. This set of four graduate students had selected SIGCHI for their evaluation. As part of their effort, they had interviewed members of CHI-Squared, the Chicago Local Chapter and other officers of SIGCHI. One of the students, who originally came from Asia and thus, carefully avoided the use of English articles, said quite innocently, during the interview, "Please, what mean CHI Mafia?" About a month later, one of us was talking with a newly appointed chair about the upcoming election, and he said, matter-of-factly, "of course, you have the disadvantage of being members of the CHI Mafia." Whoops! We thought we knew what CHI Mafia meant but evidently we didn't. Our definition did not make us key members of this organization. This must make the Chair of SIGCHI a don, or dona, in its feminine version and the Executive Vice chair the consigliere, or consiglieria. Before Interpol comes and whisks us away, we think we should discuss the perception of the CHI Mafia, some of its inevitability and also steps that SIGCHI has taken to eradicate the Mafioso, including us.

The CHI Mafia is a pejorative term and refers to a set of people who consistently hold power within SIGCHI without leaving room for new volunteers to come in and play key roles within the organization.

Because Marilyn Tremaine (changing her name from Mantei to Tremaine does not count!) was one of the original founders of SIGCHI in 1982, being SIGCHI Chair in 2001 places her automatically in the CHI Mafia. This is also true for Wendy Mackay who was SIGCHI Chair in 1990. Are we therefore guilty of working hard to hold on to the reins of power? To defend us personally, both of us left SIGCHI to pursue other careers, moving to other countries, taking on new jobs, starting families, etc. Both left for ten or more years. Marilyn Mantei even started a committee "to get her out of SIGCHI" which no one would agree to join. Granted, we ran for office when contacted by the nominating committee chair that was desperate for volunteers to fill out the slate. And, perhaps, because of name recognition from having been in office before, we were elected. We both found a SIGCHI that had changed dramatically and

that required a lot of learning on our part. Still, we are part of the CHI Mafia and we should be replaced.

The problem with any organization of volunteers is that their reach for selecting other volunteers is usually to those they know who are tried and trusted, e.g., they get the work done on time. Unfortunately, this leads to a very narrow community and perspective. It also does not train new volunteers for carrying on the community and infusing the organization with new ideas. We need to make an effort to bring these volunteers into SIGCHI! Here is what we are doing so far.

There are only a small number of elected positions within SIGCHI. These positions need to be filled by seasoned individuals because the SIGCHI organization is now very large and has many activities that it must keep running. SIGCHI's problem has been one of not having good ways to train people for these positions while still keeping the trains running. We recently voted to overhaul our bylaws with the idea of creating elected positions that had no key work role assigned to them. In this way, interested members can get involved with SIGCHI and have a voice in its policies and decisions, from what the content of its conferences should be to whether SIGCHI should give its members access to the ACM digital library. The new bylaws would create members at large. Some of the key roles in SIGCHI would be appointed so that experienced volunteers could carry out the jobs required. In the interim until these bylaws are passed by the membership, a much larger number of adjunct chairs has been appointed to the board with the idea that some of these people will eventually run for office. We can even create an adjunct chair of "chair shadowing" if someone is interested in running for head of SIGCHI.

But mostly, if we are the CHI Mafia, we need to start shaking down the community for new volunteers. If you are a SIGCHI member who has the time (about 2-4 years), interest and energy to get involved with SIGCHI; if you are someone who really feels that certain operations of SIGCHI definitely need changing; if you have an entirely new approach that you think it would be a good idea for SIGCHI to embrace; then contact us. A truly great time to get involved is during the CHI conference. All the officers will be spending time in the SIGCHI booth and all the officers will be at the open business meeting (I know of four people who got swept into the SIGCHI organization at the last two business meetings.) But, we warn you, once a member of the CHI Mafia, it is very difficult to leave.

Computers and Kids

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"The Children's Challenge: New Technologies to Support Co-Located and Distributed Collaboration" Report on the CSCW 2000 Panel by Amy Bruckman, Allison Druin, Kori Inkpen, and Jenny Preece

Today's children can be found spending hours interacting with computers, playing games, sending email to friends, visiting chat rooms, and sharing games over the Internet. At the same time, if there are five computers in a room with five children, within a few minutes, half of the children will be gathered around each other's computers.

They will be doing anything from sharing a game to exploring a web site together. Children are social beings. They need to collaborate—face-to-face and from afar. They reflect this need in how they use their technologies. However, what we often forget is that collaboration between children will not occur just because they share the same computer or email between two computers. Children's social interactions need to be supported and encouraged by the technologies we develop. We can so often forget that there are huge changes taking place in young children's cognitive development and social understanding—changes which can offer us challenges in the types of hardware and software interfaces we develop. Current technologies only scratch the surface in terms of what is possible in CSCW for children. To discuss these issues, Allison Druin organized a panel at CSCW 2000 in Philadelphia to reflect on collaboration for kids.

Since the focus of CSCW is on collaborative work, kids are rarely included in discussions of CSCW. Yet kids increasingly are doing serious work online, learning as well as playing and socializing. Focusing on issues of collaboration for kids highlights new issues of broader relevance to the CSCW community. Druin highlighted the issue of co-located collaboration. Kids collaborating may be in the same place, in different places, or both. These disparate interaction modes are too often clumped together. For example, Druin showed the latest version of Kidpad and highlighted features designed to support two children working at the same machine at the same time, each with their own mouse.

Amy Bruckman from the Georgia Institute of Technology asked the question, how is designing for kids different from designing for adults? In designing for kids, we assume:

- kids are intelligent
- kids are creative
- they need clear, simple UI design
- they are capable of great things (if we give them good tools and support)
- kids will rise to our expectations
- if they fail, it's our fault as designers

But is designing for adults really so different? In some ways, designing for kids is easier, because we start with more faith in

their abilities and respect for their potential-attitudes that would improve our design work for adults as well.

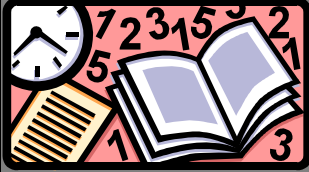
Bruckman went on to describe research projects in her "Electronic Learning Communities" (ELC) research group at Georgia Tech, where she applies the constructionist philosophy of education to the design of online communities. Constructionism is Seymour Papert's expansion of Jean Piaget's constructivist philosophy; it advocates learning through design and construction activities. In Bruckman's MOOSE Crossing, kids build a virtual world out of words, learning creative writing and computer programming in the process. The community provides not just technical support, but also emotional support, a ready supply of role models, and an appreciative audience for completed work. In the AquaMOOSE 3D project (by Georgia Tech student Jason Elliott), high-school students learn by mathematically specifying the motion of their fish avatar in a shared world. In Palaver Tree Online (Jason Ellis), middle-school students learn about history by interviewing elders who lived through that time. For example, students reading "Diary of Anne Frank" interviewed World War II veterans; students learning about the civil rights years interviewed older African Americans.

Since many household names from children's entertainment have websites, Jenny Preece (University of Maryland, Baltimore County) interviewed a sample of parents about their children's activity on the World Wide Web and then reviewed three popular sites mentioned in the interviews. Descriptions of how 6 children aged 3-9 years and 6 children aged 10-14 years use the Web suggest that the younger group likes software that they can control and that responds by moving or making sounds. Cartoons were mentioned the most and no one mentioned using software to communicate with others. The 10-14 year olds liked to be in control and for the software to be responsive. Several, aided by parents, send email messages to friends and family, and older children used word processing, the Web and Ebay with their parents. Two fourteen year olds had been banned from joining chatrooms, and safety was mentioned as a prime concern by parents.

Although this study involved only 12 children, the findings support claims (Druin, 1999) that children like software that enables them:

- to be in control and not to be controlled
- to create things and to express themselves, and
- to be social and to collaborate.

this article is continued on page 9



HCI Education - principles for design and formulae for creativity

I hope this is not too shocking a confession for someone known as an author of a major HCI text book and SIGCHI Bulletin Education Editor to boot, but, in the autumn term, I taught my *first* full HCI module. To be fair I've previously taught what I believe was one of the first full CSCW modules in the UK, taught virtual reality and visualisation, and shared or contributed to numerous HCI courses, but never before have I taught, on my own, a full term of general HCI!

The majority of my students were on a masters course on distributed interactive systems. This posed an interesting problem. The sort of systems that are relevant for them are not the traditional 'one man and his screen' systems, but web interfaces, mobile devices, ubiquitous computing. I recall this time last year, writing the April column, and wondering what we should be teaching our students in the 21st Century, precisely because of these radical changes in the underlying technology and devices.

The answer must lie in emphasising general principles whilst demonstrating specific applications. However more and more I find myself describing things not just in terms of general HCI principles, but in terms of general *design* principles. I continually return to one of the key principles of design – *understand your materials*. In HCI these materials include the people themselves as well as the devices they use. Again, the focus on purpose and context in HCI are not HCI issues only, but relevant to any design.

Another group of students are doing a research-based masters course, and their module assignment includes an analytic literature review of an area they chose in HCI. Again I keep finding that individual tutorials focus less on the specific topics they have chosen, and more on general techniques to externalise their own reactions to the papers they've read, discovering themes, issues and links within the body of collected material.

Neither general design principles nor these techniques for analytic thinking offer specific solutions to problems or give prescriptions for good system design. Instead they enable the student to be innovative and creative. Although I can't guarantee inspiration I can be 95% confident that they will discover something exciting and new for themselves, but based solidly on established work.

When I was a child I used to look for formulaic answers, mechanisms, themselves created by some inspiration or invention, but which, once so created, automatically and repeatedly

give correct solutions to problems. This is perhaps the way of the mathematician, finding, via some mysterious process, timeless truths, that once discovered no longer require insight either of their creator or reader. Mathematics textbooks also take this form presenting theorems and proofs as finished, perfect items, but not the process through mistaken paths, hunches and insights that lead to them.

Now perhaps I look for creativity and formality more evenly spread — methods, techniques, frameworks that structure and guide, not solving a problem, more putting the person using them into a position where they can add critical insight. If we want to produce software, electronic or mechanical hardware or bureaucratic procedures, these must be reduced to the mechanical. However, design is more contingent yet still constrained.

Looking at other disciplines we see different mixes of creativity and formality. Nowhere is this more clear than in creative arts. In Western (or at least 20th century) culture there has been a focus on internal inspiration, the sense that the artist is born with a muse within. In contrast, when reading about oriental art I found that the eastern artist would reproduce pictures of masters (I'm sure not without adding something of their own flair) for perhaps 40 years before presuming to produce something new of their own.

If we look at music we see perhaps a more balanced view of individuality and creativity vs. discipline and structure. There is no denying the sheer creative power of the greatest musicians, yet this is also accompanied by endless practice, skills obtained through diligence and training. You do not expect to put a flute in the hand of a young child and expect it to produce inspired works in the way we do with a paint brush. Teaching HCI should be more like music than either mathematics or (western) fine art.

Returning to basic principles of HCI, John Carroll is in the process of editing a book on theories in HCI. This is precisely drawing out some of the enduring theories that underlie the discipline and should complement Andrew Monk and Nigel Gilbert's excellent edited book "Perspectives on HCI: Diverse Approaches" (Academic Press, 1995).

For more about the sort of techniques I use to stimulate research and innovation see links at <http://www.hci-book.com/alan/hci-education/>

Local SIGs

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<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/local-sigs/>

Y2K CHI Local SIG Sampler

Each month, I compile a sampling of what is happening in the world of CHI Local SIGs, and I post that compilation to the chi-announcements@acm.org mailing list. Each sampling provides selected details of recent or upcoming Local SIG activities, as well as news of relevance to all Local SIGs.

Since I am writing this column on the eve of a new year, it seems fitting to compile a CHI Local SIG sampler for the entire past year, though at a much higher level than the monthly version.

So, here is a sampling of what happened in the world of CHI Local SIGs during the year 2000.

Chapters Anew & Resurrected

Seven chapters were newly chartered during 2000: DC_CHI (Washington, DC USA), BelCHI (Belgium), CHISPA (Spain), PhiCHI (Philadelphia, PA USA), CHI Austria, SanD CHI (San Diego, CA, USA), and GMU SIGCHI (a student chapter at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia USA).

Four chapters announced their pre-chartered beginnings: SIGCHI Finland, SIGCHI Romania, IsraCHI (Israel), and IndiaSouth-CHI.

Two dormant chapters based in the US state of Texas -- Lone Star CHI (Dallas) and CHI-Austin -- showed signs of resurrection by year's end. (For more on the phenomena of Local SIG dormancy and resurrection, see the April 2000 issue of *SIGCHI Bulletin*.)

Meetings Galore

The monthly sampler is always filled with information about meetings sponsored by Local SIGs.

Meetings of particular significance this past year included: CHI-SA 2000, South Africa's first HCI conference; NordiCHI 2000, the first Nordic conference on Computer-Human Interaction (sponsored by SIGCHI.dk, West Sweden CHI, & SIGCHI Finland); and SIGCHI_NZ's first Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction (New Zealand).

Several additional full-day or multi-day conferences were sponsored by CHI Local SIGs during 2000. A vast number of shorter meetings (e.g., 2 hours in length) were also sponsored. Meetings usually featured one or more speakers and sometimes featured site visits (often to usability

labs), design sessions or other types of workshops, elections of officers, Local SIG strategy discussions, or social activities (e.g., dinner). Some meetings were co-sponsored by other HCI organizations, and a couple could be attended via the internet (e.g., MOCHI's April meeting; for more information about the southeastern Michigan & northern Ohio USA chapter, see the July 2000 issue of *SIGCHI Bulletin*).

SIGCHI's largest chapter, BayCHI (San Francisco Bay Area, CA USA), sponsored the most meetings during a single month -- 6 in May, evidence of the activity of its several Birds-Of-a Feather groups. (For more information about BayCHI, see the November-December 00 issue of *SIGCHI Bulletin*.)

The most intriguing social meeting of the year was held by MilwauCHI (Milwaukee, WI USA) in December. It featured "bowling, subs, disco music, fog, and black lights."

CHI 2000 in The Netherlands featured my annual full-day workshop for leaders of CHI Local SIGs (see the September-October 00 issue of *SIGCHI Bulletin*) as well as informal gatherings of members of a large number of chapters around the world.

Changes Galore

Changes in the world of CHI Local SIGs during 2000 included not only the new and resurrected chapters identified earlier, but also new officers and other volunteers, new services, new logos and websites, new t-shirts & mugs, and new policies.

CHI*Atlanta (GA USA) adopted an intriguing "Minuteman policy" of asking for help in running the affairs and functions of the group. The new approach recognizes the fact that members are busy professionals with a frequently unpredictable schedule and may be able to volunteer some time one month, but not the next. Rather than asking members to volunteer for a specific role, title, and term, the council invites members to come to council meetings and committee meetings when they can - as Minutemen and Minutewomen who want to contribute to the cause and become involved. Once there, members work with others to evaluate the needs for the upcoming month and volunteer their time and talents as appropriate to the current need.

this article is continued on page 9



Web of Confusion, Part 2 (UI 2001 Conference, 30 Oct - 1 Nov 2000, Boston)

In Part 1 of this article I described the low success rate for web-based tasks in general, and web purchasing in particular, as reported by Jared Spool and his colleagues at User Interface Engineering. Part of the solution to this dismal performance is for developers to have a better understanding of user interface design issues as they relate to web design. This was the primary purpose of the UI 2001 conference.

Altogether there were eight seminars, with the possibility of attending two in full one-day form. I will describe the two that I attended in some detail, followed by my impressions of the conference as a whole. Details for all of the seminars can be found at www.ui2001.com.

Visual Literacy for UI Designers – Bill Horton is well-known as the author of *The Icon Book* and several titles on documentation, online training and web design. It is therefore no surprise that his seminar had a familiar ring to it in a number of places, especially in the area of icon design. However, the material covered a wide range of topics related to visual design and effective visual communication: thinking visually, clarity, principles of effective graphics, illustrating concepts and international graphics. Unfortunately, some of the finer visual points are lost in the notes, which are reproduced (understandably) in black and white. This is partly compensated for by access to the full-color slides from the William Horton Consulting web site (www.horton.com – confusingly, the web site refers to the presentation variously as “How We See” and “Say It in Pictures”.)

The strength of this seminar was that it dealt very comprehensively with the principles of visual design, but naturally not all aspects would have appealed to everyone. The introductory sections covering visual perception and memory would have been very familiar to anyone with an HCI background and these also overlapped significantly with Tom Hewett’s seminar which I also attended.

Visual design for the web did not get as much specific attention as some participants might have expected, and several issues were addressed that were perhaps more relevant to documentation than to UI design, although interesting nonetheless.

Designing With the Mind in Mind – Dr Tom Hewett is a cognitive psychologist who is active in the field of HCI. The focus of his tutorial was cognitive issues, primarily perception, memory and problem solving, as well as their implications for effective user interface design. Unlike brief overviews of the Gestalt principles and theories of short-term memory that frequently appear in UI design material, Tom Hewett provided detailed references of research and numerous “live” experiments to drive the issues home. These practical exercises would have been extremely useful to anyone faced with the prospect of teaching or promoting UI design, but they would also appeal to those wanting a greater understanding of the underlying psychology. Web or UI designers looking for “instant” guidance that could be applied to next week’s project would have been disappointed, though. Tom Hewett’s approach is more reflective and needs to be absorbed over time. In fact, he insisted that participants make the effort to occasionally re-visit the material.

My overall impression of UI2001 is that it would have been very difficult not to find something of interest and genuine value to almost anyone actively working in UI and web design. The three-day format, with short versions of each of the seminars presented on the second day worked very well, although it might have been more effective had this been done on the first day. Participants would have been able to decide if they had really chosen the right seminars – particularly important given both the breadth and depth of topics covered.

Computers and Kids from page 5 ...

Kori Inkpen of Simon Fraser University concurred, noting that children can find it fun to play with others and often more engaging when they get to share experiences with friends and family. Therefore, she argued, we must extend our current view of technology to be a "social facilitator," rather than merely being a workplace tool. Computers have the potential to enhance social experiences by supporting users' interactions with each other as well as with digital artifacts.

Traditional computers limit co-located children's collaborative interactions. Current computers have been designed with one mouse and one keyboard, with the underlying assumption that one person will use the computer. "Single Display Groupware" (SDG) is an emerging research area that explores innovative technological solutions to support small groups of users collaborating around a shared display. Inkpen presented examples from her work at Simon Fraser University related to SDG and the use of handheld computers for children.

Finally, Druin pointed out that in designing technologies for children, all too often we fail to consult children in the design process. A series of questions were posed to the panel by elementary-school children via video:

- Why is collaborating hard?
- Why don't adults listen to kids more?
- Which is harder to do, collaborate with someone right in front of you or far away?
- What kind of technologies do you make to collaborate at home?
- What kind of technologies do you make to collaborate at school?
- How do you make computers that can help kids not fight so much?

These short, but to the point, questions caught the panelists off-guard but addressed key underlying issues related to supporting children's collaboration with technology. Panel and audience members stumbled through attempts at answering these basic questions, proving how much we still have to learn about this important topic.

References

Druin, A. 1999 *The design of children's software*. Morgan-Kaufmann.

Preece, J. 2000 *Online Communities: Designing usability, supporting sociability*. John Wiley & Sons: Chichester, UK.

SIGCHI 2001 - 2003 Executive Committee Candidates

(pending official certification by ACM)

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Hans de Graaff
Scott Overmyer
Scott Robertson

vice-Chair for Publications

Wendy Mackay
William Newman

Local SIGs from page 7 ...

SIGCHI adopted a new policy to govern the chartering of CHI Local SIGs. Before a charter is granted, a chapter's potential members and area of service should be discussed with any overlapping chapter or other HCI organization. Evidence of mutual discussion among the overlapping groups is required before an overlapping chapter is approved. (SIGCHI's goal is to avoid both enforced monopolies over membership groups as well as unnecessary fragmentation of the membership. It is hoped that members will work out what is best for HCI in their locality.)

SIGCHI's tutorials-to-go program, introduced in late 1999, provided no value whatsoever to Local SIGs during 2000. Changes are in the works to enable the program to provide value during 2001.

ACM eased Local SIGs' task of completing the required annual report by providing a form that can be completed and submitted via the web. Additional web-based tools (e.g., electronic voting & membership processing) that were to become available to Local SIGs during 2000 were delayed but are expected to appear sometime during 2001.

And More

Much, much more happened in the world of CHI Local SIGs during 2000. For example, lots of services existing prior to 2000 (e.g., newsletters, job banks, & libraries) continued to be offered. But since this is only a sampling...

To keep up-to-date on what is happening in the world of CHI Local SIGs, check the CHI Local SIGs webpage (<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/local-sigs>) every so often for news items and changes to the listing of CHI Local SIGs. To get the monthly CHI Local SIG sampler via email, subscribe to chi-announcements@acm.org; for instructions, see <http://www.acm.org/sigchi/listserv/>.

Workshop and Conference Reports

An experiment in users envisaging and generating actions for universal design: A report from the Fellows Workshop at the Conference on Universal Usability, CUU 2000, 15 November 2000, Arlington Virginia, USA

Queen Esther Booker, Cristina Chisalita, *Penny Collings, *Joëlle Coutaz, **Dong Thi Bich Thuy, Adelaide Edelson, *Clare-Marie Karat, Deane Robert Larkman, **Taylor McConnaughay, **Dianne Murray, **Alan Newell, Cearbhall E O Meadhra, *Mary Beth Rosson, Quan T Tran, Marlo Wilson, Chui Yin Wong

Objectives

The purpose of the Fellowship Program of the Conference on Universal Usability was to elicit and organise a broad range of insights on the problems and prospects of universal usability by bringing together people representing a diversity of needs and expectations in the international community.

The Process

Sixteen people participated in this workshop. There were four invited Fellows, eight selected Fellows and four workshop Co-chairs. We, the Fellows, were provided with financial support to cover essential expenditures. Following the workshop we delivered a presentation to CUU 2000, and then produced this report.

Electronic Discussion

Before the workshop, we engaged in an electronic discussion to set a workshop program.

We constituted a complex group, consisting of diverse cultural, geographic and professional backgrounds, and including people with a disability.

Workshop

We identified a broad range of issues related to universal usability. We focussed on human diversity, illustrating the issues by telling stories in the user's voice.

Of the many stories we heard, we selected three that we felt illustrated central universal usability issues.

CUU 2000 Presentation

Our presentation centred on these three stories, written and spoken in the user's voice.

These stories were:

- Addie's shoes (narrated by Addie Edelson, USA).
- Deane's desire for independence (written by Deane Larkman, narrated by Vicki Larkman, Australia).
- The Fisherman's son (narrated by Dong Thi Bich Thuy, Vietnam).

Alan Newell, on behalf of all Fellows, emphasised several generic issues for universal usability that our stories specifically illustrated:

- Technology has great potential and is tremendously empowering. It can change your lifestyle, giving back what was taken away. It is indispensable to many people. To disabled people, problems in the use and reliability of technology can have a range of far reaching effects on their lives. New technologies could be much more effective if they included the needs and wants of a wider user population.
- The functionality of enabling technology should include the effects of self-image, and should provide user choice. This technology should neither further disadvantage users nor make them appear to be more disadvantaged.
- Different social norms within different cultures must be considered in designing systems.

- Systems with only English language interfaces exclude users from other language groups. Also, the metaphors and icons they contain will not be understood in different cultures.
- Designers should focus on the user and on the task.
- Iterative design and user participation in the design and testing process is vital. Complete understanding of users is difficult where user and designer characteristics are significantly different.
- Designers need to consider the combined effects of multiple disabilities before they can achieve fully functional solutions.
- Beware of designing for those with one disability and unintentionally excluding others with different disabilities. Excluding a particular user group must be a conscious design decision.

Marlo Wilson then called the audience to action, addressing the various design stakeholders.

Benefits

For CUU 2000, the Fellows offered a seldom seen session — the voice of users. We chose to tell stories, and thus described specific examples of generic design issues, and illustrated areas of concern and means of influence.

The experiences and learning we shared have changed us irrevocably. Many of us will translate this to our own communities. We continue to work together, and will produce reports and papers.

The financial support we received enabled us to develop a shared vision and extend our influence, proving to be an important way of harnessing our energy, and commitment to universal usability.

Where to Find the Full Report

The full report has been submitted to the ACM publication *Interactions*.

Acknowledgment

The following sponsors provided financial support to ensure CUU 2000's success, including support for the Fellows Program and the CUU 2000 Student Fellows. ACM SIGCHI: Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction; America Online; The Morino Institute; Intel; Oracle; Motorola; Sun Microsystems; National Institute for Standards and Technology; Information Technology Laboratory; National Science Foundation.

*Workshop Co-chair. **Invited Fellow.

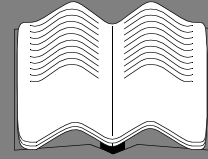
All other Fellows were selected by an application process described at <http://www.acm.org/sigs/sigchi/cuu/wkfellows.html>.

Authors' Addresses

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Book Review

Larry Wood, Editor
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Review of: *Making Use: Scenario-Based Design of Human-Computer Interactions*

by John Carroll

Review by Larry E. Wood

Carroll, John M. *Making Use: Scenario-Based Design of Human-Computer Interactions*. MIT Press. ISBN: 0-262-03279-1

Carroll's new book could be aptly titled, "All you wanted to know about Scenarios in Design but didn't get the Chance to Ask (John Carroll)." The book is a comprehensive and integrated coverage of Carroll's (and various colleagues, especially Mary Beth Rosson) 10+ years of work with scenarios as vehicles for design. To quote from the preface of the book, "This book is not a manual, a textbook, or a handbook. It is a technical monograph that integrates a series of projects around a set of methodological themes."

Because of the emphasis on theory in the early part of the book, a reader interested in the practical use of scenarios might infer that there is little of value in the book. However, in two of the later chapters (9 and 10), the author does provide some useful information on the practical aspects of (scenario-based) design.

To set the stage for the importance and potential value of scenario-based design, in Chapter 1 the author provides descriptions of empirical studies done on two design projects, one of which is a multi-media system for university education in engineering (ultimately a failure), and the other a library system for a large research center (ultimately a success).

In chapters two and three, Carroll provides a thought-provoking theoretical discussion of design in general (Chapter 2) and Scenario-based design in particular (Chapter 3). The discussion in Chapter 2 draws on such classic works as those by Henry Dreyfus and Christopher Alexander. Chapter 3 elucidates the role of scenarios in design, beginning with the question "What are Scenarios?" and then following with discussions of various characteristics such as their role in stimulating reflection in design, and their differing levels of abstraction.

In chapters 4 and 5, the author describes, in some depth, two design projects that were scenario-based. The one described in chapter 4 is a video information system to archive time-based stories told by designers, following a

project through its various stages of developments. Chapter 5 describes the MiTTS (Minimalist Tutorial and Tools for Smalltalk) system familiar to those who have followed Carroll's work through the years. Both are used as examples in the discussion of various concepts presented in subsequent chapters.

After presenting an "unadorned" scenario-based approach in chapter 5, Carroll goes on to elaborate the approach in Chapters 6-8. In those chapters, he discusses Claims and Requirements (chapter 6), the advantages of building on previous designs with similar features (chapter 7), and the role of evaluation and theory building in design (chapter 8).

As mentioned earlier, Carroll actually does provide some practical advice, regarding the use of scenarios in design in chapters 9 and 10. In chapter 9, he outlines a scenario-based development framework grounded in object-oriented programming concepts and responsibility-driven design issues.

In Chapter 10, the author asks the question, "Where do Scenarios Come From?" He provides the answer through an introduction to some of the popular methods for understanding the world of potential users such as ethnographic methods and participatory design. Methods are discussed for analyzing and transforming scenarios in ways useful for design activities.

The role of scenarios in managing the task-artifact cycle ("task outcomes and human experiences implicitly set the agenda for new technological artifacts, which alter subsequent task outcomes and experiences) is discussed in chapter 11. Finally, in chapter 12, Carroll discusses the current status of and future challenges facing scenario-based design.

Although the practical information contained in chapters 9 and 10 is valuable, I could not recommend the book to a practitioner interested only in "how-to-do it" information on design. On the other hand, for anyone with a theoretical bent and an interest in Carroll's pioneering work on the role of scenarios in design, it is a "Must Read."



SIGCHI Minutes

Barbee Teasley, SIGCHI Vice Chair of Communications
chi-VC-Communications@acm.org

Excerpts from minutes are included below. Complete minutes can be found on-line edition at:

<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/bulletin/2001.2/minutes.html>

SIGCHI Executive Committee — October 11, 2000

Finances. The closing numbers for the CHI 2000 Conference are in. Total income was \$2,329,568 and total expenses were \$1,904,666. SIGCHI's regular return was \$184,646, with an additional surplus of \$424,902.

UPA. Scholtz has been in touch with the president of Usability Professionals Association (UPA) and will work with UPA to find new ways to cooperate for mutual benefit.

Policy Statement on Local Chapters. Concerns were raised about the policy passed at the August 2000 meeting. To address this concern, the section on formation was amended to read: "Before chapters are approved, their potential members and area of service should be discussed with any overlapping chapter, affiliate organization, or other HCI organization. There should be evidence of mutual discussion among the overlapping groups before an overlapping chapter is approved. SIGCHI wishes to avoid both enforced monopolies over membership groups as well as unnecessary fragmentation of the membership. It is hoped that members in a locality or focused non-geographic interest will work out what is best for HCI in their area." EC discussion clarified that consensus was not necessary; evidence of email, face-to-face, or other communication was sufficient. The amendment passed unanimously.

Conference Scholarship Program. Joe Konstan and Richard Anderson presented a policy to provide scholarships for people from countries with soft currency or newly-emerging HCI interest to attend SIGCHI-sponsored conferences. The policy allows conference chairs to nominate attendees. The conference must pay the first \$100 of travel expenses and waive registration fees. Awarded scholarships will pay the remainder of travel expenses. (Details in full minutes) The policy covers conferences, workshops and other meetings at conferences, and the Local SIGs Workshop, and it provides an initial annual budget of \$10,000. It was approved unanimously.

Operations. The EEC feels they are not getting adequate and/or timely response from ACM in several areas. One example is that Finances is not providing the details of transactions. The management at ACM has asked us to compile a list of issues and contact them directly to go over the issues. One particular area of concern has been working with ACM IT. It was suggested that a request ticket-tracking system be installed and utilized, so that both sides can see the status of requests.

Bob Mack has been tackling a number of tasks for the member web site. In addition, he has been handling materials for the SIGCHI booth at several conferences, including CUU, UIST and CSCW. The booths still need volunteers to staff them during the conferences. Ideally, an Adjunct Chair for Publicity would take on oversight of the booth. Jared Spool will be providing the content of our first online tutorial, and VSI will be the producer.

Education. The new ACM Curriculum for computer science courses and course content includes only 6 required classroom hours of HCI. Although this is far less than the EEC would like to have, there is little chance of changing the requirement at this point. The curriculum in no way precludes HCI classes, or even required HCI classes. Gerrit van der Veer reported on the work he has done to date on a HCI-Curriculum-Lite proposal. The goal is to develop a curriculum which covers the basics of HCI that is suitable addition to a software engineering program.

Conference Management Report. The CMC is exploring the financial impact of increasing the compensation for tutorials.

SIGCHI Executive Committee — November 8, 2000

ACM Conference Donation. ACM is planning a general computing conference in 2001 in San Jose. They have raised \$1M in contributions from industry and are asking SIGs to contribute. The EC felt that it was likely this conference will lose money, just as their earlier one did. Most SIGs are contributing nothing or very little. The EC voted 5-1 to decline to make a donation until we review the financial plans.

Conference Management Report. Of the 350 papers submitted to CHI 2001, 69 were accepted. The CHI 2002 kick off meeting takes place in Minneapolis December 9-10. The plans for '02 include a practitioners track, a design expo, usability case studies, and an interactive design experience activity taking place over 3 days. Sites in consideration for CHI 04 include Stockholm, Copenhagen, Vienna, Prague and places in Germany. The decision will be made in February, 2001. Chair selection for CHI 03 will also be concluded in February.

SIG Governing Board Report. Tremaine reported on the actions of the ACM SIGs governing board. They voted in a change in the SIG funding algorithm that is favorable for SIGCHI and other large SIGs. Services will be funded based on what a SIG earns. In the past, funds from the larger SIGs have supported the smaller SIGs. As a result, our contribution to ACM will be reduced to \$37K. ACM is doing well financially. A few SIGs that currently offer only newsletters and have small member bases were disbanded. The board has requested that we re-submit the request for changes to our bylaws. For every change requested, we need to show the old version, the new version, and the reason for the requested change.

Advisors. Tremaine has appointed Pat Whitney as a new member of the Distinguished Advisory Board.

Membership. The technical difficulty surrounding the mailing of a welcome letter to new members has been resolved. In the future, when a person joins, he/she will be added to a SIGCHI listserv and will automatically receive the welcome letter. The member can choose to unsubscribe from the listserv.

Publications. Steven Pemberton attended an ACM meeting of the editors-in-chief of SIG publications recently. One issue is online publication. *interactions*, for example, goes into the post on the publication date shown on the cover. It should go up on the web site at the same time, or even a little sooner.

Events

Ronald Laurids Boring, Editor
chi-Bulletin-Events@acm.org



Upcoming Conferences

March 13 – 17, 2001

IEEE Virtual Reality 2001

Conference featuring research on all aspects of virtual reality, from hardware implementation to 3-D CHI.

Yokohama, Japan

<http://www.vr2001.org>

March 31 – April 5, 2001

CHI 2001: Human Factors in Computing Systems

SIGCHI's annual conference focused on all aspects of computer-human interaction.

Seattle, Washington, USA

<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/chi2001/>

April 10 – 12, 2001

Ergonomics Society Annual Conference

Conference intended to support the professional development of practitioners in ergonomics and human factors.

Cirencester, Gloucestershire, UK

<http://www.ergonomics.org.uk/events/confcall01.htm>

May 11 – 13, 2001

EHCI: IFIP Working Conference on Engineering for HCI

Conference on strengthening the engineering and scientific foundations of user interface development.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

<http://www.cs.queensu.ca/~ehci01>

June 25 – 29, 2001

UPA: Usability Professionals' Association

Annual conference focused on exchange of ideas among usability professionals.

Lake Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

<http://www.upassoc.org/>

July 9 – 13, 2001

INTERACT 2001: IFIP Conference on HCI

Conference emphasizing reliability, usability, acceptability, and user satisfaction of human-oriented computer systems.

Tokyo, Japan

<http://adam.cs.inf.shizuoka.ac.jp/interact2001/>

July 13 – 17, 2001

User Modeling 2001

Conference on user modeling plus adaptive models and techniques in CHI.

Sonthofen, Germany

<http://www.dfki.de/um2001>

August 5 – 10, 2001

HCI International

Forum for the dissemination and exchange of scientific information on theoretical, general, and applied areas of CHI.

New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

<http://hci2001.engr.wisc.edu/>

August 12 – 17, 2001

ACM SIGGRAPH

Conference showcasing the latest developments in computer graphics and interactive techniques.

Los Angeles, California, USA

<http://www.siggraph.org/s2001/>

September 10 – 14, 2001

IHM-HCI 2001

Joint annual conference by the British HCI Group and Association Francophone d'Interaction Homme-Machine, covering all aspects of CHI.

Lille, France

<http://www.bcs-hci.org.uk/IHM-HCI2001/>

September 16 – 20, 2001

ECSCW: European Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work

Conference that encompasses theory, development, and design of CSCW systems.

Bonn, Germany

<http://ecscw2001.gmd.de/>

September 18 – 20, 2001

HMS 2001: Symposium on Analysis, Design, and Evaluation of Human-Machine Systems

IFAC sponsored conference on the methodology, principles, and practice of human-centered design and automation.

Kassel, Germany

<http://www.imat.maschinenbau.uni-kassel.de/hms2001/>

September 30 – October 5, 2001

ACM Multimedia 2001

Conference exploring theoretical, technological, and artistic advances in multimedia and multimedia interfaces.

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

<http://www.acm.org/sigmm/MM2001>

October 7 – 10, 2001

IEEE Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Conference

Conference with emphasis on systems engineering, human systems, and cybernetics in a CHI context.

Tucson, Arizona, USA

<http://crater.sie.arizona.edu/>

October 8 – 12, 2001

HFES: Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Conference

Conference bringing together research by human factors and ergonomics professionals.

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

<http://www.hfes.org>

For a complete listing of events:

<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/bulletin/events>

To submit an event listing, send e-mail to:

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SIGCHI & acm

ACM SIGCHI's scope consists of the study of the human-computer interaction process and includes research and development efforts leading to the design and evaluation of user interfaces. SIGCHI serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas among computer scientists, human factors scientists, psychologists, social scientists, systems designers and end users. SIGCHI sponsors the annual CHI conference, co-sponsors additional conferences and workshops, and offers its members "Member Plus" publication packages. *Interactions* magazine, the *SIGCHI Bulletin* newsletter, and access to SIGCHI Publications in the ACM Digital Library is included with SIGCHI membership.

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UIST: Symp. on User Interface Software and Technology (November)	\$15 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$4 <input type="checkbox"/>
IUI: Intelligent User Interfaces (January)	\$12 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$4 <input type="checkbox"/>
C&C: Creativity and Cognition (October)	\$14 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$4 <input type="checkbox"/>
CSCW: Computer Supported Cooperative Work (December; even years)	\$17 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$7 <input type="checkbox"/>

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Nothing

One of the worst feelings in the world is receiving an e-mail about an approaching writing deadline and then just sitting there staring at a blank screen on your word processor. There is nothingness and into that nothingness you must bring form, structure, content and above all else entertainment.

Early researchers in user interface design knew this fear of nothingness and at Xerox they quickly realised the power of the copy and edit paradigm over the create-a-new-totally-blank-thing and start-completely-from-scratch paradigm. Instead of having to bring content into the nothingness, you start with something similar and change it until it is what you want.

Nothingness causes a problem in taking that first step in creative or design processes. It also causes problems in navigation and orientation. Having distinct and tangible things in a space is vital to orientation; something to fix your gaze on, something as a starting point or a reference point when building. Arctic explorers have always feared the whiteouts when they were crossing the snow. Whiteouts occurred when white skies, snow covered landscape and clouds of falling snow conspired to create a totally white environment with no perceivable up, down, left or right. A situation likened by some to 'being inside a ping-pong ball'.

In the CAD world this orientation is vital when creating 3D structures. One thing worse than a blank 2D screen representing a blank sheet of paper is a blank 2D screen representing an empty 3D world where you don't even know which way is up and where you are. Some packages solve this by introducing grids and empty but well labelled co-ordinate axes defining the scale and the notion of upness that is necessary to begin construction.

However, while the total absence of anything is a thing to be feared, emptiness within structure is a vital, powerful and often underestimated part of the design vocabulary. Just as pauses add drama, doubt, and other emotions to our day to day vocabulary so do absences add to the structure of other created things. Within a structure nothingness can form a vital part of the design.

Consider the importance of pauses in music; that split second of nothingness after the opening bars of Beethoven's fifth. Or the school drama teacher whose boys are piling into a cupboard representing a prison-cell with a political prisoner in it and then immediately banging about as they administer a beating. 'No, no, no!' she says. 'You must all go in, wait for a second and *then* start the banging, that will be more dramatic'.

In graphic layout the use of so called 'white space' is a key resource, on the one hand it is wasteful. White space in a newspaper means printing and distributing thousands of copies of bits of nothing at all. On the other hand it gives vital structure and emphasis to key parts of the layout. Architecture too has its own version of white space. Designers such as Rogers and Piano working on the Pompidou Centre realised the power in only using half the site and keeping the rest as an emptiness; a clear space which invited others to fill it, ambling crowds, street performers, musicians etc.

The final emptiness I want to mention is the emptiness that seems like emptiness but is not emptiness. Just as the apparent empty space between the galaxies is full of matter so too is other emptiness actually filled with something. Today's telephone systems sometimes optimise the use of telephone lines and if there is no speech detected for a half second or so they go dead and use the line-bandwidth for something else until you utter another word. This is very efficient, but for a participant in a telephone conversation it can be disturbing. During those vital pauses in conversation you suddenly hear the line go dead ... one is almost forced to hum in the gaps to ensure that the conversation is not disrupted by that feeling that you have been cut off.

Well, writing about nothing has ensured that I now have a full screen of something and I am faced with the subsequent writing problem; how to knock all these text fragments into shape to turn it from a collection of bits-and-bobs into a cohesive article ... but that is a subject for another time.

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Scope. ACM SIGCHI embraces work on the hardware and software engineering of interactive systems, the structure of communication between human and machine, characterization of the use and contexts of use for interactive systems, methodology of design, and new designs themselves. SIGCHI serves as an international venue for specialists in human-computer interaction, education, usability, interaction design, computer-supported cooperative work, and other related areas.

Membership. You are invited to join and participate in SIGCHI functions. Membership in SIGCHI, which includes a subscription to the *SIGCHI Bulletin*, is open to ACM members and non-members. A membership form and contact information appear on page 14 of this issue.

Future CHI conferences. (<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/conferences>)

CHI 2001 — Seattle, Washington, USA — March 31 - April 5, 2001

CHI 2002 — Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA — April 20-25, 2002

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SIGCHI Bulletin is published by ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery, as a supplement to *interactions*.

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Printed in the USA



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SIGCHI Bulletin
March/April 2001